Letter to all Heads of Delegations (contracting parties)

I have received a letter from the Director-General in which he proposes that the matter of the occupancy of the office of Director-General be considered at the Forty-fourth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES in November.

A copy of this letter is attached.

In view of the procedures concerning the appointment of the Director-General which were adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES on 26 November 1986 (BISD 33S/55), I have asked the Chairman of the Council to have this matter included on the Agenda of the 22 September Council meeting.

I shall initiate informal consultations at Heads of Delegations level on this matter at 12 a.m. on 23 September, in Room E. You are invited to this consultation.

Alan Oxley
Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES
Dear Mr. Chairman,

Ensuring that the GATT secretariat remains in a position to offer maximum support to the contracting parties as well as to the participants in the Uruguay Round is a major objective.

Achieving this objective requires, among other things, appropriate personnel policies and forward planning. I believe this applies to the Director-General's position as well.

With clearly the same considerations in view, and having in mind that the Uruguay Round is reaching its mid-term this year, it has, I believe, appeared appropriate to a number of governments to have the question of the status of the Director-General dealt with at this juncture.

As you will recall from our conversation - and as I have also informed the Chairman of the Council - I fully share this view.

Notwithstanding the procedures approved by the CONTRACTING PARTIES on 26 November 1986 (BISD 33S/55), I am, therefore, willing to have the CONTRACTING PARTIES deal with this question without delay, taking my present term as ending in 1988 rather than on 30 September 1989 when it is due to expire.

I would suggest that this letter be circulated to contracting parties immediately so that the Council, at its September Session, may take note of its contents, and a decision is taken at the Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES scheduled for November this year.

H.E. Mr. A. Oxley
Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES
Permanent Mission of Australia
Rue de Moillebeau, 56
1209 Geneva
I should add that I have been encouraged by a number of governments to consider, in the circumstances, an extension of my present contract for a further period of two years i.e. until September 1991. If such an extension was supported through a consensus decision, I would be prepared to accept the honour and the responsibility it entails.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Arthur Dunkel